

Major General Terry L. Tucker
Commanding General
U.S. Army Armor Center



Forging the Future — Armor Conference 2004

Armor Conference 2004 promises to be another outstanding opportunity for our Armor and Cavalry force to focus their collective energies on discussing and solving the challenges that our Soldiers face across the operational and warfighting spectrum. This has been a busy year for all of us, and it is important that we discuss and capture lessons learned before we forge too far forward.

As in previous years, the Armor Conference will host an all-star lineup of guest speakers who have been at the forefront in leading Soldiers and units during this ongoing Global War on Terrorism campaign and Operation Iraqi Freedom. I am in awe of how well our forces have adapted to the demands placed on them, and once again, our Tankers and Cavalry Troopers have proven they are among the best in the world.

As Chief of Armor, I am responsible for ensuring the Armor Center continues to produce well-trained leaders and Soldiers, and to adjust our training paradigm to meet the asymmetrical challenges unfolding in this dynamic and dangerous environment. During the Armor Conference, there will be round table discussions and subject-matter expert briefings intended to present more detailed updates, overviews, and discussions on the many aspects of this year's theme.

Key leaders from the 1st Armor Training Brigade (ATB) will brief participants on the evolution of initial entry training (IET) to build Soldiers and Warriors to meet the needs of the force in the contemporary operating environment. The 1st ATB will discuss how they are adapting training for IET Soldiers to emphasize the basic Warrior tasks and Warrior drills required for all Soldiers, in addition to military occupational skills trained in OSUT. IET is moving toward more basic tactical training in a field setting to better prepare all Soldiers for the demands of

combat over extended periods. Tasks previously conducted in a garrison setting are trained as early as possible in a field setting so they can be reinforced throughout the Soldiers' IET. Lessons previously taught through large-group lectures are now taught in a small-group setting with more hands-on training, practical exercises, and competition between groups.

Technology and doctrinal innovation will be a key theme for the 16th Cavalry Regiment during this year's Armor Conference. Subject-matter experts from the regiment will brief participants on how they are providing the force with the best qualified leaders by incorporating Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below (FBCB2) and maneuver control system-light training into our core courses of the Armor Captains Career Course and the Armor Officer Basic Course. We have already incorporated FBCB2 operator and integrator training into the task force defense instruction and Warfighter exercises, with the intent that leaders arrive to their follow-on assignments equipped with a working knowledge of digital operations.

The Directorate of Training, Doctrine, and Combat Development (TD CD) will present seven subject-matter expert briefings to the force during the conference. Our Doctrine Division will discuss joint operations and doctrine for the new brigade combat teams. The purpose of the briefing is to enlighten the force on how our current brigades are transforming to conduct operations in the joint environment based on the Unit of Action model. Doctrine will also brief new gunnery standards based on the contemporary operating environment and lessons learned from Operation Iraqi Freedom. These briefings include information on tank gunnery, scout gunnery, and the status of mobile-gun system (MGS) gunnery. The Combat Development Division will brief the status of the 2d Cavalry Regiment's transforma-

tion and mounted battle command on the move (MBCOTM). The Training Division will present a TADSS report to the field that focuses on the conduct of fire trainer advanced gunnery training system (COFT-AGTS), a scenario-based gunnery simulator, and thru-sight video (TSV) that allows the commander to verify the gunner's performance, debrief the exercise, and assess training effectiveness.

The Training Division will also brief the new officer foundation standards (OFS) manual for combined arms brigade staff officers. This presentation describes how the U.S. Army's first comprehensive task analysis on combined arms brigade staff officers was conducted. It provides information on the program's concept, task selection process, and task analysis procedures. The Training Division will complete the slate of briefings discussing Armor Center advanced distributed learning initiatives. This presentation includes a brief history of armor distance learning, information on courses currently using distance learning, and examples of courseware, which demonstrate different learning strategies. Also included are descriptions and images of interactive tools and the collaborative environment used for on-line synchronous small-group instruction.

These are just a few of the many topics that will be addressed at this year's Armor Conference. We will also have our usual mix of social and fun activities that award us the opportunity to reminisce about the past and catch up with old friends. I encourage you to attend this conference. Additional information is available at our web site: www.knox.army.mil/arconf/.

Forge the Thunderbolt!